

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

PREAMBLE

Little Athletics Queensland (LAQ) recognises the importance of providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all those who participate in Little Athletics.

LAQ seeks to eliminate all forms of unsportsmanlike behaviour, and has developed this policy to clearly outline the processes and penalties to be applied.

It is recommended that this policy be adopted by all Affiliated Centres to ensure a common acceptable standard of behaviour, processes and penalties.

The penalties associated with this policy are presented as guidelines for Centres to follow. Penalties may change and/or categories added at the discretion of the LAQ Board.

POLICY

A registered athlete, an official, an assistant, or any spectator will not indulge in any unsportsmanlike behaviour towards another participant, official, volunteer, or spectator involved in a recognised Little Athletics activity and will adhere to the relevant Codes of Conduct.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Remove all forms of unsportsmanlike behaviour from all aspects of Little Athletics.
- Protect all participants, officials and volunteers from exposure to unsportsmanlike behaviour.
- Provide a consistent application of processes and penalties for breaches of the Codes of Conduct.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- a) Administrators of Little Athletics at State, Region and Centre level, whether they be employed or a volunteer;
- b) Athletes in activities and events held by or under the auspices of LAQ and its Centres;
- c) Coaches of athletes in activities and events held by or under the auspices of LAQ and its Centres;
- d) Officials in activities and events held by or under the auspices of LAQ and its Centres;
- e) Managers of teams participating in activities and events held by or under the auspices of LAQ and its Centres;
- f) Spectators of activities and events held by or under the auspices of LAQ and its Centres.

DEFINITIONS

“Centre”	A Little Athletics Centre as defined in the LAQ Constitution.
“CEO”	A person appointed by the Board of Directors as Chief Executive Officer of the Association.
“Centre Manager”	A person elected by the Centre members to act on behalf of the Centre in matters forthcoming to the Centre.
“Centre Team Manager”	A person appointed by the Centre committee to manage the athletes representing the Centre at all approved competitions.
“Centre Secretary”	A person elected by the Centre members to carry out duties as listed in the Centre Constitution
“Category”	Is the Category of Violation as listed in this Policy.
“Commissioner”	Appointed by the LAQ Board of Directors to review reports and make recommendations to the LAQ Board on penalties as required.
“Discipline Tribunal”	Shall comprise three individuals appointed by LAQ Board to deal with all matters relating to discipline of members of LAQ and/or affiliated Centres in accordance with the LAQ Constitution.
“Expulsion”	Is to bring the individual’s membership to an end immediately such that it does not revive automatically with the passage of a stipulated period. Expulsion precludes the individual from enjoying the benefits of membership e.g. competition, officiating and coaching. Expulsion does not preclude entitlements of an ordinary citizen.
“Official”	Is any person appointed to an official position of LAQ, its Regions or Centres.
“Penalty”	Is the punishment imposed by the Commissioner or Discipline Tribunal in accordance with this policy.
“Registered Little Athlete”	Is a child registered with a Little Athletics Centre or an LAQ.
“Report”	A report must include all relevant information relating to the incident e.g. date, time, venue, persons involved in the incident.
“Spectator”	A person observing at a Little Athletics event, or its associated activities, including training, from a position in the immediate vicinity of those activities.
“Suspension”	Is to debar an individual temporarily from membership. Suspension precludes the individual from enjoying the benefits of membership e.g. competition, officiating and coaching for a specific period after which the membership is reinstated. Suspension does not preclude the individual from entitlements of an ordinary citizen.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOUR

Unsportsmanlike behaviour can occur in both the instigation of and response to any incident and includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse and/or assault
- Physical abuse and/or assault
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Making derogatory statements or gestures
- Cheating
- Non acceptance of the official's decision in an inappropriate manner
- Equipment Abuse

CATEGORIES OF OFFENCE AND PENALTY

Unsportsmanlike behaviour has been broken up into a number of categories of violation to determine the most appropriate penalty to be applied for breaches to this policy. These penalties may change from time to time. Applicable penalties for each category of offence are shown below:

These categories are:

Category of Violation	Incident	Penalties		
		1 st Offence	2 nd Offence in any category within 2 years	3 rd Offence in any category within 2 years
P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of audible foul language • Disputing judgment/decision of an official • Minor equipment abuse • Frivolous complaints (first incident) 	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Suspension 1 week
P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough play, barging, pushing etc • Displays of unnecessary aggressive behaviour • Verbal abuse via telephone to LAQ/Centre personnel • Disparaging or insulting remarks and/or the use of foul language directed toward another athlete/official. • Failing to carry out a lawful direction of an official 	Written Warning	Suspension 1 week	Suspension 2 weeks
P3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged verbal abuse of an official/athlete • Deliberately barging with force • Displays of excessive aggressive behaviour • Frivolous complaint (second and further incidents) • Major equipment abuse where there is potential to injure participants and/or spectators 	Written Warning	Suspension 2 weeks	Suspension 4 weeks
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provoking a fight, but no further involvement • Fighting after being provoked 	Suspension 2 weeks	Suspension 4 weeks	Suspension 8 weeks
P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provocation and involvement in fighting • Threatening an official or athlete 	Suspension 3 weeks	Suspension 6 weeks	Discipline Tribunal
P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically attacking an official or athlete 	1 Season	Tribunal	Discipline Tribunal
P7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other as determined by the Commissioner 			

- Note 1:** *The suspension applies to the next competition day, regardless of level of competition, including LAQ Competitions.*
- Note 2:** *Example: If an individual commits a P2 offence and within two (2) years commits a P1 offence it will be deemed a second offence and that individual will be liable for a written warning.*
- Note 3:** *Example: If an individual commits a P1 offence and within two (2) years commits a P2 offence it will be deemed as second offence and that individual will be liable for a suspension of one (1) week”.*
- Note 4:** *Any fourth or more offences within two (2) years will be referred directly to the Discipline Tribunal.*

PROCESS AND HANDLING - LAQ:

A person witnessing any act of unsportsmanlike behaviour, or alleged breaches of code of conduct by any person to whom this Policy applies, may report the incident to the CEO.

Such a report should be lodged in writing to the CEO. On receipt of the report, the CEO will refer it immediately to the Commissioner.

PROCESS AND HANDLING - CENTRE:

A person witnessing any unsportsmanlike act/s, or alleged breaches of code of conduct by any person to whom this Policy applies, may report the incident to the Centre Manager or Centre Secretary for incidents at Centre level or Centre carnivals.

Such a report should be lodged immediately in person, or in writing. On receipt of the report, an enquiry will be undertaken by a person appointed by the Centre.

The Centre official will investigate the complaint immediately following the procedures as set out by the Centre Committee. A report is to be provided to the Centre Committee, together with any recommendations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE

Where an individual is reported for an offence under this policy, he/she may desire to accept the automatic penalty (as prescribed within the penalties) without a hearing or appeal. In these cases, the penalty may be modified at the discretion of the Centre Committee or Commissioner, with the exception of Category P6. The individual must provide written acknowledgement of responsibility for the incident and acceptance of the resulting penalty.

APPEALS

Appeals against penalties must be lodged and handled in accordance with the LAQ Constitution. A person will remain suspended until the appeal against such finding has been adjudicated upon.

SERVING OF PENALTIES

Penalties not completed by the end of the current competition season shall carry over to the next and if necessary, to a subsequent competition season.

TRANSFER OF PENALTIES

Any penalty invoked by LAQ or Centre is transferable to another. Where an individual transfers to another Centre or State Association, a check must be completed on existing penalties during the clearance/transfer process to ascertain any outstanding penalties/suspensions. Any portion of a penalty NOT served at one Centre will be deemed to apply to the next Centre.

REGISTER OF SUSPENSIONS/PENALTIES

The CEO and each Centre must maintain a register of penalties or suspensions which details the person's full name and address, the category of offence, penalty invoked, the date invoked and the date the penalty will be served out. A copy of any penalty given at Centre level is to be forwarded to the CEO.

FRIVOLOUS OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

Upon investigation of a complaint, should the person conducting the complaint find that it is frivolous, a warning will be given, in the first instance, to the person making the complaint.

If a complaint is deemed to be malicious, the person making the complaint shall be brought to appear before the Discipline Tribunal or Centre Committee.